

On a cold late winter Sunday morning in early 1984, my daughter Ellen and I took photos of parts of Milford Avenue where I grew up. The first attached photo captures the remains of #5 Milford. Its caption is taken from my essay appearing in the Sunday, Apr 29th New Jersey section of the NY Times, "A City Needs Spirit to Survive." #5 Milford has since been replaced by a large building winding around to Clinton Avenue, the Shani Baraka Women's Resource Center.

Another photo, attached, taken that long ago Sunday morning was 61 Milford Avenue where Mayor Ed Koch lived in the late 30's and early 40's. Using an imaginary clock dial, the Koch's window was at about 9 o'clock. A large apartment complex, now 47 Milford, has preplaced an adjacent empty lot and the #61 building.

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Across the street, facing what used to be my father's dental office/home, are the remains of No. 5 Milford Avenue, once a sturdy brick apartment building with stone lions in front. Its open windows bare burned-out black, and a few shards of glass resembling jagged broken teeth—a dentist's nightmare. This toothless leer was a mockingly macabre metaphor of Newark and the 1984 inner city. It is Selye's last stage of adaptation to stress, but it is stress in the breach, stress absented, the apathy born of drugs and alcohol, the dispirited debris of despair and death.

